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EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES
the AVENGERS
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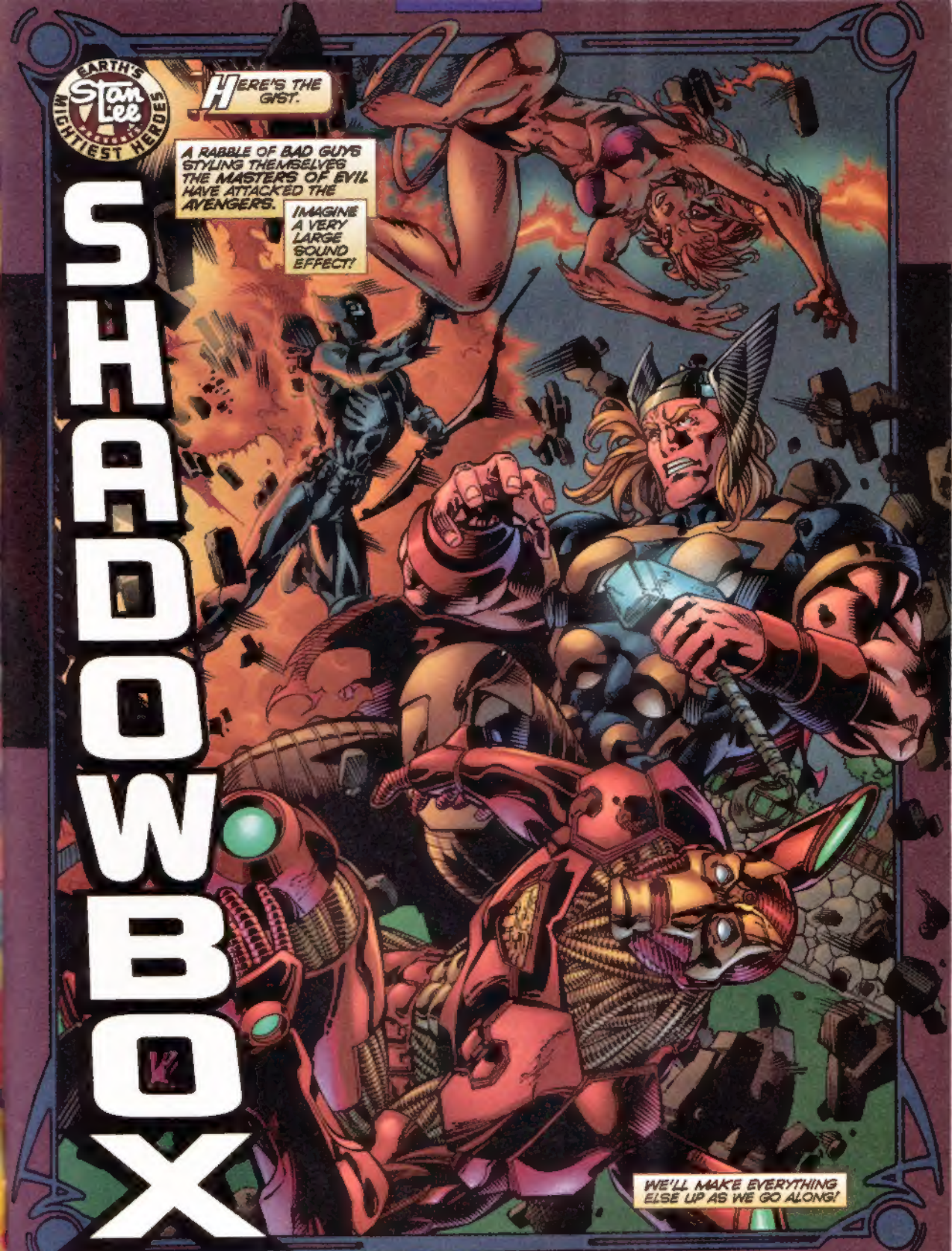
EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES
Stan Lee
HERE'S THE GIST.
A RABBLE OF BAD GUYS STYLING THEMSELVES THE MASTERS OF EVIL HAVE ATTACKED THE AVENGERS.
IMAGINE A VERY LARGE SOUND EFFECT!
SHADOWBOX
WE'LL MAKE EVERYTHING ELSE UP AS WE GO ALONG!

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MELTER! DESTROY IRON MAN'S CHEST PLATE AND I'LL *SKEWER* HIM LIKE A *STUCK PIG!*

DONE! HIS ARMOR'S NO MATCH FOR MY SUB-NUCLEAR DISRUPTION BEAM!

THE SONIC BLASTS OF THE KLAW WILL *ATOMIZE* THE GOD OF THUNDER!

AND *WHIRLWIND* WILL TEAR HAWKEYE LIMB FROM LIMB!

GOT TO NAIL THE BLACK KNIGHT BEFORE HE REACHES IRON MAN!

GEEZ! I THOUGHT *WE* WERE THE TEAM WITH A CORNER ON THE *HUBRIS* MARKET!

FTSSART

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WHY DON'T YOU GO HOME AND FINISH THE DISHES, HONEY!

UGHHH

YOU'RE NO MATCH FOR ME!

WHILE MY COHORTS DESTROY THE AVENGERS, MY AWESOME RADIOACTIVE POWERS WILL *OBLITERATE* THEIR HEADQUARTERS FOR OUR FINAL *TRIUMPH!*

GIVE IT UP, ARCHER.

THOOM

YOU'RE SO SCARED YOU CAN'T EVEN *SHOOT* STRAIGHT!

I MEANT TO DO THAT, CLYDE.

TRIP

OOPS!

FOOL! YOU'VE *UNHORSED ME!* AND THE RADIOACTIVE MAN'S RIGHT BELOW US!

THKLOOM

LOOK OUT!

YOU IDIOTS!

GET AWAY FROM ME! YOUR RADIATION'LL KILL US ALL!
Uhhh! LOST TOO MUCH... ENERGY! CAN'T STAND! YOU... MOVE.
I CAN'T! I...I THINK I BROKE MY LEG!
WHAT HAPPENED? TEN SECONDS AGO, WE WERE ON TOP OF THE WORLD!
KLAW'S HOLDING THOR AT BAY BUT HE CAN'T BREAK THROUGH THE WHIRLING ARC!
WITH IRON MAN DOWN MAYBE I CAN ACTUALLY MELT THOR'S HAMMER!
YOU MIGHT HAVE DAMAGED ME ONCE WITH THAT DISRUPTOR STUFF...
... BUT I'VE ADDED A FEW IMPROVEMENTS RECENTLY, INCLUDING AN ADVANCED REFRACTORY COATING.
EXCUSE ME...
... BUT WE HAVEN'T FINISHED OUR DANCE YET.
WHAT -- IT CAN'T BE!
WHRAM!
LET'S JUST CALL IT SECRET INGREDIENT XO-4 AND NOTE THAT THEY DON'T USE IT IN TOOTH-PASTE!

BLAST! WHAT'S THIS GUY MADE OF ANYWAY?
THKREEEEEEEEEEEEEE
PAGH! MINE PATIENCE HATH EXPIRED!
LO! THERE SHALL BE AN ENDING FORTHWITH!
AND NOW, TROUBLESOME VARLET...
...THOR DECLARETH OUR REVELS HATH FINALLY ENDED!
SO BE IT!
THOOM
IMPOSSIBLE! HE'S ACTUALLY WALKING STRAIGHT INTO MY SOUND BARRIER!
MUST INCREASE THE DECIBEL LEVEL TO PEAK INTENSITY!
EEEEEEEEE

AND THAT'S THAT.

COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT BETTER IF CAP HIMSELF HAD BEEN HERE, eh, THOR?

THOR?

BRING ME THE OTHER FELONS, FRIEND HAWKEYE.

I SHALL SERVETH THEM AS I AM ABOUT TO SERVETH KLAW! NO LONGER WILT THEY THREATEN MINE ADOPTED HOMELAND.

Uhhhhh...

PUT HIM *DOWN*, THOR.

OR WOULD YOU COMMIT *MURDER*, THE SAME AS OUR ENEMIES?

WHO DARES COMMAND A *GOD*?

CAPTAIN AMERICA DARES. PUT HIM *DOWN*.

CAP! YOU'RE BACK! YOU'VE DITCHED THE WINGS ON YOUR FOREHEAD!

THEY *NEVER* FELT RIGHT SOMEHOW, HAWKEYE. BUT THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT NOW.

I'M PROUD OF YOUR VICTORY HERE TODAY. BUT WE'RE *NOT*, AND NEVER *WILL* BE, KILLERS. NOT WHILE *I'M* IN CHARGE OF THE TEAM.

OUR FOES ARE *EVIL*... AND 'TIS WITHIN OUR POWER TO *CRUSH* THEM *COMPLETELY*.

WHY THEN SHOULD THOR'S HAND BE STAYED?

BECAUSE WE *AVENGE* WRONGS. WE DON'T *COMMIT* THEM.

IF *THIS* BE THE *WAY* OF THE AVENGERS, THEN MAYHAP THOR BE AVENGER NO *LONGER!*

NICE GOING, CAP. THAT WAS SOME *ACE* DIPLOMACY.

MAYBE YOU AREN'T REALLY THE JOE FOR THE AVENGERS RAMROD.

MAYBE WE NEED A *NEW* TOP GUN.

HAWKEYE?

I WAS USELESS IN THE BATTLE! USELESS!

MAYBE I'M NOT CUT OUT TO BE AN AVENGER!

HELLCAT?

IRON MAN, CORRECT ME IF I'M WRONG.

DIDN'T THE AVENGERS JUST *WIN* THIS ONE?

YES. AND A LITTLE TOO EASILY IF YOU ASK ME.

SO *MAYBE* IT'S TIME WE ASKED A FEW QUESTIONS.

WHY DID YOU AND YOUR ALLIES ATTACK US, KNIGHT?
FIGHTING AVENGERS IS OUR JOB. IF WE BEAT YOU, WE'RE NUMBER ONE!
WE'D HAVE IT ALL... MONEY... FAME... BABES...
UNBELIEVABLE. AT LEAST KANG LASTED A COUPLE OF ROUNDS. THESE JERKS ARE STRICTLY GRADE Z!
THE QUALITY OF BAD GUYS IS DECLINING... RAPIDLY!
YOU'RE RIGHT. THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG HERE.
SEE IF YOU CAN GET ANYTHING ELSE OUT OF THEM.
"I'M OFF TO VISIT THE SWORDSMAN IN THE HOSPITAL."
'TIS DONE.
MINE ENEMIES HATH PREPARED THE FEAST.
NOW I SHALL SAVOR ITS DELIGHTS!
POWER, AMORA, HERE IN THIS PLACE WHERE THERE IS NO ASGARD, NO ODIN*!
THOR ALONE STANDS IN MY WAY...
...AND SOON, WITH YOUR HELP, HE WILL BE MY ALLY!
AID ME NOW... AND YOU SHALT SHARE IN MY... TRIUMPH! MY WORD ON IT.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND, LOKI. WHAT, EXACTLY, ART THOU AFTER?
AND THE WORTH OF LOKI'S WORD..?
A VALUELESS COIN, AS WE BOTH KNOW.
NEVERTHELESS, YOU MAY GAIN YOUR HEART'S DESIRE IF YOU AID ME.
I HAVE A CUNNING PLAN.
* AVENGERS 3 HE SPILLED THE BEANS -- Big Jim

FURTHER INTERROGATION IS USELESS. NONE OF THESE CLOWNS SEEM ABLE TO STRING A COHERENT THOUGHT TOGETHER...
... LET ALONE MAKE SENSE.
I GUESS IT'S TIME TO ASK COLONEL FURY TO PICK UP THE TRASH. AGAIN.
IRON MAN! I MUST SPEAK WITH YOU!
Oh, HELLO Ms. VAN DYNE. WHAT IS IT?
IT'S HANK! HE'S BEEN MISSING FOR DAYS. THERE'S NO TRACE OF HIM.
HE'S NOT WORKING SECRETLY FOR THE AVENGERS? YOU'RE NOT HIDING HIM, ARE YOU?
NO. LET ME ASSURE YOU, I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE HE IS.
BUT I WONDER...
WHAT?
WE KNOW HANK'S ULTRON MODEL ROBOT WENT BAD. AND SOMETHING HAPPENED TO THE VISION SHORTLY BEFORE THAT.
HANK COULD NEVER RESIST A PUZZLE.
HE'D WANT TO KNOW WHY.
BUT IF ULTRON BEGAN MALFUNCTIONING WHILE IT WAS STILL WORKING WITH HANK...
I'VE GOT AN IDEA. S.H.I.E.L.D. REPOSSESSED THE VISION'S BODY.
WE'LL TELL COLONEL FURY ABOUT THE TRASH PERSONALLY.

RUSH, RUSH, RUSH, MY DEAR SCARLET WITCH. 'TIS THE TROUBLE WITH THE MODERN WORLD. EVERYONE SCURRIES ABOUT SO FURIOUSLY...
...AND MISSES SO MUCH.
IRON MAN NEEDN'T TROUBLE TO ALERT THE GOOD COLONEL. NONE OF HIS CAPTIVES WILL BE HERE WHEN HE RETURNS.
BUT... WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO THEM?
THOU ART QUITE LIKE THY MOTHER. THE ENCHANTRESS TOO ALWAYS WANTS TO KNOW EVERYTHING.
IT IS ONE OF HER LESS ENDEARING CHARMS.
WATCH, AND LEARN.
FOR I AM ABOUT TO RENDER THESE UNFORTUNATES INTO A DELIGHTFUL COMESTIBLE...
...OF PURE ENERGY!
AIIEEEEE!
AGAIN, I FEED! AGAIN, MY POWER GROWS!
BUT WITH EACH REDUCTION, THERE IS LESS ENERGY! I MUST HAVE MORE! MORE I TELL YOU!
I MUST HAVE IT ALL...
...TILL I HAVE SUCKED THE MARROW DRY!
THEN SHALL I BEGIN ON THE HEROES!
SKREACK

BUT AS LOKI'S SPELL SOARS SKYWARD...
...uhhh...
...DID ANYBODY GET THE NUMBER OF THAT TRUCK?...
...IDIOT! SHOULD'VE KNOWN THERE'D BE FEEDBACK.
WHA --?
THE VISION'S INTERNAL DEFENSES ARE TRYING TO ABSORB ME!
SLAM
THAT WAS CLOSE!
BUT I'LL HAVE TO WORK FAST! THIS IS GOING TO TRIGGER A MAJOR IMMUNE SYSTEM RESPONSE!
GOT TO PLUG BACK INTO THE VISION'S MEMORY CORE.
Huh? THE VISION'S BODY IS ABOARD THE S.H.I.E.L.D.'S HELICARRIER.
I'LL BET THAT WAS FURY'S DOING!
BLEEP
BUT THE INITIAL DATA FLASH I GOT WAS RIGHT!
TWIK TWIK TWIK TWIK
SOMEBODY'S BEEN EXTRACTING INFORMATION FROM THE VISION'S MEMORY CORE!
AND IT'S BEING TRANSMITTED TO TONY STARK'S MANSION!

BRZAACK
HOW THE HECK COULD —!
IT'S HAPPENING AGAIN! THE MEMORY CORE'S GOING WILD!
. I DON'T K'NOW WHO'S DOING IT OR WHY...
...BUT NOBODY USES MY CREATIONS LIKE THIS...
. .OR MY NAME ISN'T HANK PYM!
ITZWP
I'LL HAVE TO SHUT THE VISION DOWN!
A FEW APPROPRIATE DISCONNECTIONS SHOULD DO THE TRICK!
FIZWPPT
...AND VOILA!
AARGH!
IMMUNE SYSTEM'S FINALLY CAUGHT UP TO ME!
NO TIME TO DISABLE IT!
MY ARMOR'S KEPT ME ALIVE SO FAR...
. .BUT I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE NOW!

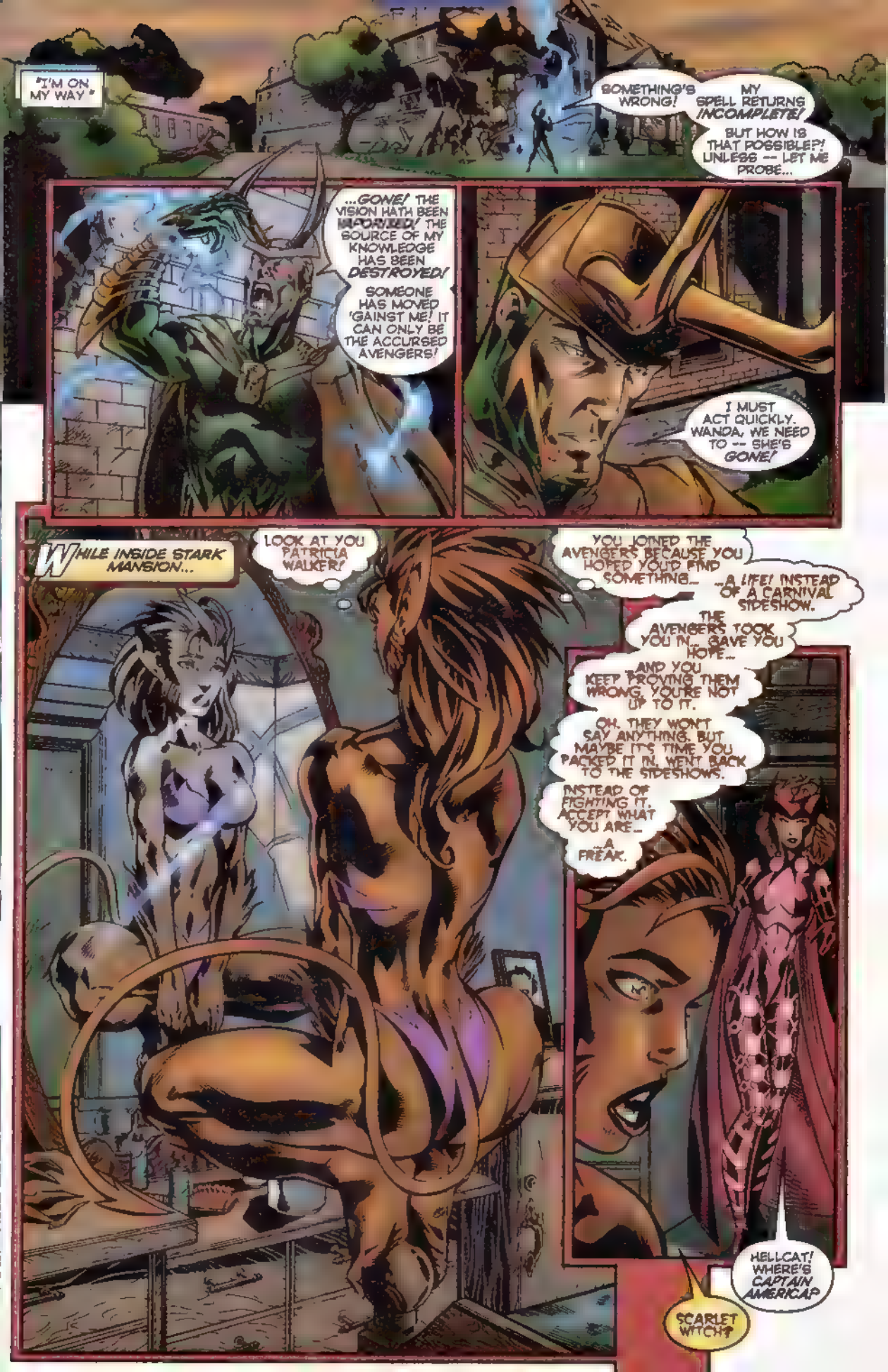
THE EAR CANAL'LL TAKE ME DIRECTLY TO THE OUTSIDE...
SPUTT PUTT
...BUT MY SUIT'S OUT OF POWER!
WHAT?
HANK! HONEY! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
JANET! IRON MAN! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I'D LIKE TA KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT ONE TOO!
WE WERE LOOKING FOR AN OLD FRIEND, COLONEL FURY.
WE FOUND HIM.
HE WAS NEVER LOST. I KNEW ANTENNA HEAD WAS IN THERE ALL THE TIME
WHY DO YOU THINK I KEPT THE BODY?
AND NOW THAT HE'S OUT, I WANT HIM DEBRIEFED... COMPLETELY
NOT MUCH TO TELL. THE VISION'S DEAD KAPUTT!

SO, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE US, COLONEL?
FAT CHANCE. I ALSO WANT TO KNOW EXACTLY HOW YOU GOT IN HERE WITHOUT MY AUTHORIZATION!
STARK INDUSTRIES BUILT THE HELICARRIER, COLONEL. IT HAS NO SECRETS FOR ME.
THAT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH. HAND OVER ANTMAN AND START TALKING AND DON'T TRY ANYTHING FUNNY. MY BOYS' RAIL GUNS'LL TEAR EVEN YOU APART.
I'M NOT SURE OF THAT, BUT WHY FIND OUT?
WHAT? I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
YOU'RE JUST GOING TO HAND HANK OVER TO THIS.. THIS CREEP?
JAN —
I DIDN'T SAY THAT.
BESIDES, FROM THE OZONE MY SENSORS ARE DETECTING, I THINK WE'RE ALL ABOUT TO HAVE A MORE PRESSING PROBLEM!
SFSSSSS
THE VISION! IT'S SMOKING!
IF MY READINGS ARE CORRECT, COLONEL, IT'S ABOUT TO DO MORE THAN THAT!
THERE'S A CHAIN REACTION BUILDING!
WASP! ANTMAN! SIT TIGHT!
YOU TOO, COLONEL!

AND DON'T WORRY, STARK INDUSTRIES WILL BE GLAD TO REPLACE THE WALL PANEL!
AT COST!
KATHWHAARAM
IRON MAN! YOU'VE GOT TO RADIO CAP TO MEET US AT THE RUINS OF THE AVENGERS MANSION!
SOMETHING'S HAPPENING THERE! SOMETHING TERRIBLE!
YOU GOT IT!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT! THEY DESTROY THE VISION...
...NEARLY BLOW UP THE HELICARRIER...
...AND WALTZ RIGHT OUTTA HERE!
MOVE IT, YOU YABBOS! I WANT THEM TRACKED AND FOUND!
NOW!

MEANWHILE, ON A SOLITARY LEDGE HIGH ABOVE THE BUSTLE OF MANHATTAN..
..AN ERSTWHILE AVENGER MUSES ON THE MEANING OF LIFE!
THIS WORLD BE A JOYLESS PLACE!
NO REAVING, NO PILLAGING, NO EXECUTIONS!
FAH! 'TIS ALMOST BEYONDETH BELIEF!
MAYHAP, THOR, WE CAN CHANGE ALL THAT AFTER ALL, ARE WE NOT GODS?
AMORA!
I HAVE COME WITH AN OFFER FROM LOKI
WHAT? SHOULDST THE GOD OF THUNDER CURRY FAVOR WITH THE FATHER OF LIES?
AND YET IT WAS LOKI WHO TOLD YOU THE AVENGERS WERE ENEMIES, THOR. LOOK YE NOW. WAS HE SO WRONG?
I KNOW NOT. MINE MIND BE CONFUSED BY... I KNOW NOT WHAT.
THEN LET US HELP YOU, MY HANDSOME ONE
COME TO ME... ...AND WE WILL BEGIN TO MAKE SENSE OUT OF THIS LAND.
AMORA
AND THE SOUNDS OF THE CITY RETREAT FAR INTO THE DISTANCE.

NEW YORK HOSPITAL...
...WHERE THE BADLY INJURED SWORDSMAN WAS TAKEN FOR TREATMENT..
...EXCEPT...
HE'S GONE! BUT HE COULDN'T STAND UP, LET ALONE WALK OUT OF HERE UNDER HIS OWN STEAM!
NOT AFTER THE WOUNDS HE SUFFERED AT THE HANDS OF THE HULK!
CAPTAIN AMERICA?
DOCTOR FALLON! WHERE IS HE?
WE DON'T KNOW!
WE'VE BEEN CALLING STARK MANSION BUT YOUR PHONES AREN'T WORKING
AN HOUR AGO, THE NURSE ON DUTY HEARD A SHOUT. WEMBERT RAN TO HIS ROOM...
..BUT HE WAS GONE!
BACK IN SCOREKEEPERS!
SHE REPORTED SOME BLUE SMOKE IN THE AIR THAT VANISHED AS SHE ENTERED
WE'VE BEEN SEARCHING THE FACILITIES AND THE GROUNDS EVER SINCE...
BUT WE'VE FOUND NOTHING.
THIS HAS NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE! SHOULD WE.. CALL THE POLICE?
YES ALTHOUGH I THINK IT MAY ALREADY BE TOO LATE
CAPT. THIS IS IRON MAN. CODE RED! AVENGERS ISLAND. COPY?


"I'M ON MY WAY."
SOMETHING'S WRONG!
MY SPELL RETURNS INCOMPLETE!
BUT HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?! UNLESS -- LET ME PROBE...
...GONE! THE VISION HATH BEEN VAPORIZED! THE SOURCE OF MY KNOWLEDGE HAS BEEN DESTROYED!
SOMEONE HAS MOVED 'GAINST ME! IT CAN ONLY BE THE ACCURSED AVENGERS!
I MUST ACT QUICKLY. WANDA, WE NEED TO -- SHE'S GONE!
WHILE INSIDE STARK MANSION...
LOOK AT YOU PATRICIA WALKER!
YOU JOINED THE AVENGERS BECAUSE YOU HOPED YOU'D FIND SOMETHING...
...A LIFE! INSTEAD OF A CARNIVAL SIDESHOW.
THE AVENGERS TOOK YOU IN... GAVE YOU HOPE...
AND YOU KEEP PROVING THEM WRONG. YOU'RE NOT UP TO IT.
OH, THEY WON'T SAY ANYTHING. BUT MAYBE IT'S TIME YOU PACKED IT IN, WENT BACK TO THE SIDESHOWS.
INSTEAD OF FIGHTING IT, ACCEPT WHAT YOU ARE...
...A FREAK.
HELLCAT! WHERE'S CAPTAIN AMERICA?
SCARLET WITCH?

TRAITRESS!
THERE'S NO TIME FOR THIS! I MUST SEE CAP!
THRAXXX
I HAVEN'T HAD A SECOND ALONE TILL NOW! LOKI HASN'T TRUSTED ME --
OH!
SKRACCT
UKK!
YOU DON'T HOLD IT AGAINST ME, DO YOU?
ZINGG
WITH GOOD REASON, APPARENTLY.
DON'T BE ALARMED, LITTLE ONE. LOKI INTENDS YOU NO HARM.
BUT... YOU URGED THOR TO ATTACK US!*
AN OVER-ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE TO A CONFUSED SITUATION.
* AVENGERS #83

NO... I... I GUESS I DON'T.
EXCELLENT. BECAUSE I'M HERE TO MAKE YOUR MOST SECRET DREAMS COME TRUE.
WHY? WHAT ARE YOU? MY FAIRY GOD-FATHER?
HARDLY. NEVERTHELESS, I FEEL YOUR PAIN...
...AND I HAVE THE POWER TO HELP.
THE SCARLET WITCH HAS BETRAYED YOU. BETRAYED THE AVENGERS THEMSELVES.
SHE MUST BE PUNISHED!
BUT HER ABILITIES CAN STILL BE USED IN THE NEVERENDING WAR AGAINST EVIL!
HER POWER CAN BE YOURS. HER BEAUTY CAN BE YOURS.
HER BODY... CAN BE YOURS.
BUT... WOULD THAT BE RIGHT?
RIGHT? IT WOULD BE JUSTICE! YOU WOULD HAVE WHAT YOU WANT! WHAT YOUR... APPEARANCE... HAS DENIED YOU ALL THESE YEARS...
...PERHAPS EVEN... DARE I SAY IT? CAPTAIN AMERICA?
WOW.
$$$$$

MEANWHILE...
...ON THE RUINED AVENGERS ISLAND OFF THE SHORES OF MANHATTAN...
I THOUGHT THE GAMMA REACTOR WAS SHUT DOWN AFTER ITS NEAR MELTDOWN!*
THAT'S THE TROUBLE. IT WAS!
OVER IN IRON MAN HQ 6!
LOOK! ABOVE THE CORE!
OLD FOES! COALESCING OUT OF THE ENERGY!
THE SUPER ADAPTOID!
THE GRIM REAPER!
THE LIVING LASER
BUT THE REAPER'S DEAD! THE LIVING LASER TOO!
I'LL DEAL WITH THEM!
IRON MAN! WAIT!
FIGHT
THERE WAS NOTHING REALLY THERE! JUST SOME SORT OF INCOMPLETE GHOST IMAGES!

BUT THE REACTOR'S ENERGY'S STILL BUILDING!
INCREDIBLE! I'M READING SOME SORT OF NON-RADIOACTIVE NEXUS BEING GENERATED...
...ALMOST LIKE A CRACK IN THE UNIVERSE!
IF ONLY THOR WERE HERE! WE LACK THE STRENGTH TO RESEAL THE CORE ALONE!
TAKE COVER! FAST!
THE ROLLING SOUND OF A MIGHTY STORM SHAKES THE TREMBLING ISLAND...
...AND A MOMENT LATER...
MY JOURNEY HATH ENDED! WHO CALLED THE GOD OF THUNDER?
WHO SUMMONS THOR?
NEXT
FRIENDS BECOME ENEMIES WHEN AVENGER FIGHTS AVENGER AS LOKI BENDS REALITY TO HIS WILL!
SHADOW WAR!
BE HERE!